



# Inside College Station

*A publication for College Station citizens*

## *How Safe is Your House When You are Away?*

Traditional summer vacation months (June, July, and August) are also the peak months for burglaries, according to FBI statistics. It's no coincidence. Most residential burglaries occur during the day when people are at work or school. Going away on vacation makes homes even more attractive as targets.

To minimize the chance of burglary, Lt. Mark G. Langwell of the College Station Police Department offers the following burglary prevention tips to homeowners which can be downloaded [www.cstx.gov/police](http://www.cstx.gov/police). The website also contains safety ideas and tips related to a variety of other subjects.

The best prevention starts with understanding how burglars select targets. They look for homes that are unoccupied and unprotected, easy to access through concealed entry points, and blessed with good escape routes. In many cases they only need 60 seconds to break into a home. However, if people make their homes unattractive as targets, burglars should pass them by.

### ***Prevention tips:***

**Doors and Locks:** Make sure exterior doors are made of solid wood or metal and secured with a heavy-duty deadbolt lock with a one-inch throw bolt and a heavy-duty knob-in-lock set with a dead-latch mechanism. Don't forget garage and back doors, which are often the weakest entry points.



**Windows:** Close the latches on all windows and, for extra security, place a secondary blocking device such as a wooden dowel or through-the-frame pin. Make sure the blocking device can be easily removed from bedroom windows in case of fire.

**Lighting:** Create the illusion of occupancy with light-timers on interior lights near the front and back windows with the curtains drawn. Similarly, exterior lighting on the front of a property should be on a timer. Don't leave them on all the time unless you want burglars to think you're out of town.

**Neighbors:** Ask a trusted neighbor to pick up your mail and newspapers and oversee vendors such as lawn mowing services. Encourage them to park in your empty driveway once in a while and even give them a key to

check inside your home to make sure all is well. Don't leave a key hidden in flower pots, under doormats, or on ledges.

**Landscaping:** Trim tree branches up to six feet off the ground and trim your shrubs down to three feet. This makes it easier for neighbors to monitor your yard and minimizes hiding places for burglars.

**Alarm Systems:** Besides arming your alarm system before you leave, make sure you have alarm company signs near the front and rear doors and alarm company decals on ground floor windows to deter burglars.

Following these steps should significantly reduce the chance that a home will be targeted for burglary, but no system is foolproof. That's why it's always good to keep an up-to-date inventory of your possessions to make filing an insurance claim easier. As part of "Operation ID", the College Station Police Department has engravers that citizens can check-out.

The College Station Police Department will also conduct security surveys on your College Station home or business. To schedule a security survey, reserve an engraver, or for further information, please contact the College Station Police Department's Crime Prevention Unit at 764-3573. Upon completion of the security survey, homeowners may be eligible to receive a discount on their insurance.



## Mark your calendar

**July 3-5** Exit Teen Center closed

**July 4** Independence Day, City Offices closed, all City pools open. No sanitation collection.

**CS Noon Lions Club Annual "I Love America Celebration,"** George Bush Presidential Library & Museum, 691-4000

**July 5** TAMU second summer session begins

**July 6** Planning and Zoning Commission\*, 7 pm, Location TBD

**July 11** Teen Court, 6 pm, 763-3499

**July 12** Senior Computer Club, 9-10:30 a.m., 764-6371

**July 13** City Council\*, Work/Study Session, 3 pm; Regular Meeting, 7 pm, City Hall

**July 15** Christmas in July, Adamson Lagoon, 2-4 pm, 764-3735

**July 20** Planning and Zoning Commission\*, 7 pm, City Hall

**July 25** Teen Court, 6 pm, 763-3499

**July 26** Senior Computer Club, 9-10:30 a.m., 764-6371

**July 27** City Council\*, Work/Study Session, 3 pm; Regular Meeting, 7 pm, City Hall

**July 29** Double Dip Day, Adamson Lagoon, 764-3735

**August 3** Planning and Zoning Commission\*, 7 pm, City Hall

**August 6** National Kids Day, 1 pm, Lincoln Recreation Center, 764-3779

**August 8** Teen Court, 6 pm, 763-3499

**August 9** Senior Computer Club, 9-10:30 a.m., 764-6371

**August 10** City Council\*, Work/Study Session, 3 pm; Regular Meeting, 7 pm, City Hall

\* Broadcast live on Cable Channel 19 and [www.cstx.gov](http://www.cstx.gov)

## News to know



Get out of your house... and meet your neighbors. That's the message CSPD wants to get out to residents for **National Night Out**. On Tuesday, August 1, residents are encouraged to meet their neighbors. CSPD officers will be available to visit neighborhoods where gatherings occur to answer questions and share crime prevention information. For more information concerning **National Night Out**, or to arrange for an officer to visit your gathering, please contact Officer Robert Turner at 764-3579.



With a national increase in aluminum costs, residents are reporting a dramatic increase in the amount of aluminum cans stolen off the curb. Money from the sale of curbside commodities returns to the City to pay for other recycling programs which include: cell phone recycling, battery recycling, small electronics recycling, household hazardous waste recycling events, etc.

As a result, the City is asking residents to help eliminate or reduce the theft. You can help by placing recycling out at 8 am, not the night before as cans are more likely to be taken if they are out overnight. If you do see someone taking aluminum cans, please report it to the Public Works Department at 764-3690 (option 0) or call Code Enforcement with the vehicle description and license plate at 764-6363. If ticketed, individuals caught stealing curbside recycling can receive a fine up to \$500.

## Keeping Your Cool

Keeping your home cool and your utility bill reasonable at the same time can be challenging during the summer months.

Here are a few tips to help you keep your cool.



**Change the A/C filter – at least once every 30 days.** A good reminder is to change the filter when you receive your utility bill. A dirty A/C filter can increase your systems operating cost by as much as 15%.



**Have your air conditioner serviced –** coils cleaned, motors lubricated, refrigerant charge checked, and ductwork inspected for leaks. Annual maintenance will keep your system operating as efficient as possible and extend the life of the equipment.



**Use fans –** The use of fans can make the air feel 5 degrees cooler. Fans assist cooling by removing the heat and humidity from the body. Remember to turn fans off whenever the room is not occupied. Most ceiling fans consume as much energy as a 60 watt light bulb.



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**August 10** City Council\*, Work/Study Session, 3 pm; Regular Meeting, 7 pm, City Hall

**August 15** CSISD begins fall classes

**August 17** Planning and Zoning Commission\*, 7 pm, City Hall

**August 22** Teen Court, 6 pm, 763-3499

**August 23** Senior Computer Club, 9-10:30 a.m., 764-6371

**August 25** TAMU - Fall semester begins

**August 24** City Council\*, Work/Study Session, 3 pm; Regular Meeting, 7 pm, City Hall

**August 29** Lincoln Center After School Program begins, 764-3779

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